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Louisiana - Governor.

MESSAGE

OF

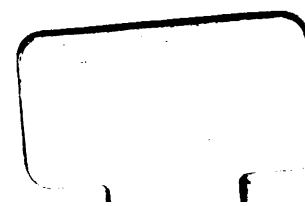
ROBERT C. WICKLIFFE,

Governor of the State of Louisiana.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
JAN 18 1944
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

JANUARY, 1858.

BATON ROUGE:
PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DAILY ADVOCATE.
1858.



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1858.

1859. Mar. 15.

Copy of

Winthrop Sargent. Esq

of Philadelphia.

MESSAGE

OF THE

Governor of the State of Louisiana.

Gentlemen of the Senate
and House of Representatives:

In accordance with the behests of the Constitution, and the usages of custom, I have to lay before you such an exhibit of the affairs of the State of Louisiana, as may better enable you to discharge the high and solemn functions of legislating for her wants and the development of her resources.

The condition of the State Treasury, according to the Report of the Auditor, shows a balance, on the first of January, 1858, to the credit of the General Fund, of forty-eight thousand four hundred and sixteen dollars, and forty-three cents.

The receipts into the Treasury proper for account of the General Fund are estimated, by the Auditor, at one million one hundred thousand dollars, making an aggregate of one million one hundred and forty-eight thousand four hundred and sixteen dollars and forty-three cents, to be applied to the general and extraordinary expenditures of government for the ensuing year. The estimated expenditures for the same period, including the unexpended balances, are fourteen hundred and eighteen thousand eight hundred and three dollars; showing a deficit in the General Fund account for the fiscal

year of two hundred and seventy thousand three hundred and eighty-six dollars and fifty-seven cents. The total receipts, less the unexpended balances, from the accounts of the various Special and Trust Funds, are estimated, for the year 1858, at twelve hundred and twenty-two thousand five hundred and sixty dollars.

It will be readily perceived that the current general resources of the State are gradually sinking below the general and extraordinary expenditures; and each year the State has been forced to borrow a larger sum from the Special and Trust Funds of the Treasury, to make good this continuously swelling deficit. It is time this vicious practice was arrested, and the expenditures of the government confined within the limits of its own proper revenues. To accomplish so desirable an end, it behoves me to impress upon the General Assembly, in the strongest language, the necessity of the most rigid economy. This economy is demanded of the government not less by a consideration of our peculiar exigencies, than by the depressed prices of all the great staples of our agriculture, and the pecuniary distress which prevails amongst the commercial and industrial classes of the community.

It would be a gross and unpardonable offence were the disbursements of the State not now made with the frugality which individual citizens have been forced to adopt, in the conduct of their own affairs. I would particularly call your attention to several items of expenditure which should be reduced.

The annual charge for public printing is over forty thousand dollars, a large part of which is incurred for the publication, in French and English, of the debates of the members of the Legislature. These debates are not made public for weeks and months after they occur, and the cost of the whole machinery of reporters and translating is incurred, together with the expense of printing, without obtaining the slightest practical benefit. Another serious charge upon the Treasury is the profuse expenditure incurred for objects of charitable and educational nature. I am convinced that it will be far better to leave the support of many of these objects to individual benevolence and private enterprise. The interest of those who have the conduct of such noble institutions is far from being increased by the continued aid of the State. In the inception of such objects it may be well to foster and encourage them by governmental assistance,

but the habit of leaning upon the State for aid begets anything else than a vigorous personal attention to and interest in their good management and economical administration. Aside from the leading charities of the State, such as the Insane and Deaf and Dumb and Blind Asylums, and the Charity Hospital, the Legislature should make the most sparing appropriations to this class of objects.

I also deem it my duty to urge upon the Legislature the repeal of the Act which throws upon the State Treasury the costs of criminal prosecutions in the several parishes of the State. This new item of expense to the government is estimated by the Auditor of Public Accounts to require for the coming year the sum of fifty thousand dollars. When these charges were borne by the several parishes, they were subjected to the audit of the Police Juries, and the immediate tax-payers had a direct and personal interest in seeing that they were kept within proper bounds.

Only by economy and retrenchment can the State hope to retrace her steps, and prepare the way for that reduction of taxation demanded by the times.

The continued encroachments by the deficits of the General Fund upon the Trust Funds of the State have already attracted the attention of the General Assembly, and I doubt not that the Acts passed by the last Legislature, taking the vast sum due these Trust Funds entirely out of the Treasury, will thus effectually check the tendency to extravagant and wasteful expenditure which has marked our past history.

In compliance with the above Act, I was furnished by the Auditor with a statement exhibiting the amount due by the State to the Free School Fund and the Seminary Fund, respectively. By this statement, it appears that the sum of $529,000 is due the Free School Fund, and $136,000 the Seminary Fund. In pursuance of the Second Section of said Act, I have issued six hundred and sixty-five coupon bonds for $1000 each, payable in forty years from the 1st of July, 1857, with interest at the rate of six per cent. per annum, and payable semi-annually.

In conformity with the Seventh Section of said Act, on the 1st of April, I caused advertisement in the New Orleans papers inviting proposals for the exchange of the State bonds thus issued for any of the bonds receivable by the State as security for the circulation of

the banks established under the free banking law, and on the first day of July the proposals received were opened in the manner required by law. The most favorable offer made for the exchange was of City Railroad bonds, at a difference of five per cent. in value—*i. e.*, ninety-five cents for the City bonds, and par for the State bonds. One proposal, offering an exchange of $100,000 of Consolidated City bonds, was received at the same rate. This difference in value did not, in my judgment, form any inducement for making the exchange; and, exercising that discretion vested in me under the Act, I rejected the proposals, and have placed in the hands of the Secretary of State and State Treasurer the bonds issued, believing, without any desire or intention to disparage the value of other bonds, that the best security the State can hold for its Trust Funds is to be found in the bonds of the State; a principle which is recognized in the Thirteenth Section of the Act referred to, which requires investments for certain funds to be made in bonds of the State at par in preference to any other securities.

During the past year, the investments of interest accruing to the Redemption of State Debt Fund and the Free School Accumulating Fund, have been made, after due form of law, in State bonds, at rates varying from $81 88-100 to $89. In one case, fourteen City bonds were taken at seventy-three cents, to complete the amount required.

I refer you to the Report of the Superintendent of Public Education, for a full statement of the operations of that department for the last year. There are many valuable suggestions contained in that Report, which present themselves to the careful consideration of the Legislature.

The Internal Improvement Department has been actively engaged in the performance of the labors imposed upon it by the last Legislature. For a full statement of the resources and conditions of said department, I refer you to the Report of the State Engineer.

You will percieve, from the Report of the Register of the State Land Office, that the sum of six hundred and ninety-eight thousand two hundred and seventy-eight dollars and eighty cents have been received for the sale of lands during the past year. On account of swamp lands, six hundred and twenty-five thousand six hundred and thirty-five dollars and eighty cents. School lands, thirty-two thous-

and nine hundred and forty one dollars and twenty-two cents. Internal improvement lands, thirty-eight thousand and six dollars and twenty-nine cents. Seminary lands, one thousand six hundred and thirty-six dollars and forty-one cents.

The Report of the Swamp Land Board will place you in full possession of its operations during the past year. The recommendation of the Commissioner of the First District, for the building of a protection levee for the city of New Orleans, and to reclaim and drain swamp and overflowed lands, should meet with the hearty approval of the Legislature.

I would recommend the propriety of an enactment requiring the Sheriff of each parish, or other officer charged with the collection of State taxes, to publish in their respective parishes, for thirty days, a list of delinquent tax-payers, before settlement with the Auditor; said list to form a basis for that settlement.

I deem it my duty to call your attention to the Act of 1846, relative to the trial of slaves. This law requires amendment. Several instances have occurred, since the passage of this Act, when slaves convicted of the crime of murder have never paid the penalty the law demands. The special tribunal which tries them has power to fix the time for the execution of the sentence; an appeal is taken, or the condemned slave escapes from jail; the day appointed for carrying into effect the sentence once passed, there is no provision of law authorizing the designation of another. Indeed, the criminal law demands revision. In this connection, I would call your attention to the Report and recommendations of the Attorney-General.

The Report of the Adjutant-General contains a full statement relative to the affairs of the militia of the State, its present organization, and condition. It is for the Legislature to inquire whether the state of the militia of Louisiana is all that the security of her people requires, or the times demand. If not, it is its duty, by the passage of proper laws, to remedy the defects existing under the present system.

Your attention is directed to the Report of the Board of Health, to impress upon your most favorable consideration the many valuable recommendations therein contained.

The Report of the Directors and Lessees of the Penitentiary will fully acquaint you with its operations for the nine months it has been under their control.

The reports of the several railroad directors, which will be furnished you, will show that the roads have been managed with great prudence and skill, and, although affected by the monetary crisis, still continne their works to the full extent of their pecuniary ability.

The following is the amount of bonds issued from time to time to the several railroad companies:

BONDS ISSUED TO THE RAILROAD COMPANIES DURING THE YEAR 1857.

To New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad Company, 16 Bonds, of $1,000	$16,000
Issued previously, 591 Bonds, of $1,000	591,000
Total amount issued	$607,000
To Baton Rouge, Grosse Tete, and Opelousas Railroad Company, 8 Bonds	$8,000
Issued previously	28,000
Total amount issued	$36,000
To New Orleans, Jackson, and Great Northern Railroad Company, 57 Bonds	$57,000
Issued previously	800,000
Total amount issued	$857,000
To Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Texas Railroad Company, 45 Bonds	$45,000
Issued previously	90,000
Total amount issued	$135,000

RECAPITULATION.

Bonds issued during 1857, 126 Bonds	$126,000
Issued previously, 1,509 Bonds	1,509,000
Total Bonds issued	$1,635,000

ESTIMATES FILED IN AUDITOR'S OFFICE, FOR BONDS, FOR THE COMING YEAR.

By the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad Company, 50 Bonds.....	$50,000
By the Baton Rouge, Grosse Tete, and Opelousas Railroad Company, 10 Bonds.....	10,000
By the New Orleans, Jackson, and Great Northern Railroad Company, 250 Bonds.....	250,000
By the Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Texas Railroad Company, 187 Bonds.....	187,000
Total estimates, 397 Bonds.....	$397,000

The marble tablet ordered by the last Legislature to be placed in the Senate Chamber, in commemoration of the distinguished services of the Hon. John H. Harmanson, has not been erected, the appropriation of five hundred dollars being insufficient.

An effort was made at the general election of November last to enforce the Act relative to elections in the parish of Orleans. Owing to many causes beyond the control of the Executive, and the opposition of the municipal council, there was but a feeble execution of the statute.

I tendered the office of Superintendent to four distinguished citizens, before one would accept. To Judge J. B. Cotton, who did accept, I delegated the whole power given by the law, having full confidence in his discretion.

I am satisfied from his Report that the law has not accomplished what was intended by the Attorney-General, who, in answer to a call on him made by the last Legislature, to report, in his opinion, the best means of preventing violence at the polls in the parish of Orleans, recommended an armed force.

Recent events have attracted a large share of attention to the banks and banking system of Louisiana. Towards the close of the month of August last, there began, in the great commercial capital of the Union, a financial crisis, from the untoward effects of which, neither the United States or Europe are likely soon to recover. Commencing among the more or less hazardous dealers in credits, this crisis has gathered strength and violence as it progressed, until now not a single industrial calling of our people is left unaffected. A great and

rapid decline in every staple of our State has taken place, and whilst the debt of our people has remained fixed and stationary, their means have had to undergo a revolution which has beggared many who thought themselves opulent, and more or less diminished the monied wealth of the whole community.

The obvious cause of this great revolution is now apparent to all. An undue expansion of credit in every shape and form in which credit could be afforded, must undoubtedly be considered as the great moving cause of this anomalous financial panic. But the only form in which the credit system is affected, which it touches the State to examine, is the banking system. On the 14th October last, the first distinct mark of peril to the banks of Louisiana was made manifest, when I immediately repaired to New Orleans, to see that the laws were properly executed, and the interests of the State protected. Three of the free banks were forced to succumb to the storm and wholly suspend, and one of the chartered banks was partially suspended. As soon, however, as the first impulse of alarm passed away, the confidence of the public in the solvency and general good management of the banks was restored, and only a few weeks sufficed to reinstate the crippled institutions in their former position. Since the first of November they have steadily increased their coin resources, and now present an unusual degree of strength.

In looking back at the condition of the banks, as reported by the President of the Board of Currency, it will be apparent that they were not in that degree of real strength in August and September last, which the then already arising financial distress demanded. The monthly statements of the Board of Currency, for each of these months, reveal the fact that the real coin *in vault* differed from the tabular exhibit of specie by from six to eight hundred thousand dollars. So grave a discrepancy indicates a lack of fairness in the returns, or a defect in the law, which demands your attention. As we have already incurred most of the evils of a rapid contraction of the currency, it will be wise to determine whether our banking laws might not be so modified as to permanently secure to us a more decisively metallic currency. If the circulation of the banks of the State were limited to issues of ten dollars and upwards, I am satisfied a great step would be made to accomplish this end.

I need not dwell on the obvious benefits which would arise from

thus enlarging the specie basis of our currency. It is only for you to inquire whether our State is in a position to take a step which will ultimately prove so advantageous to the stability of our currency and commerce.

The wisdom of the last Legislature, in not breaking down, but rather strengthening the checks and guards which surround our banking system, is now triumphantly vindicated. I trust that the settled policy of the State will now be to maintain those checks and guards with a vigorous and jealous tenacity. The usefulness of banks is never more imperilled, than when the friends of the system would tear away those conservative restraints with which a harsh experience has taught us it is so necessary to curb their inevitable tendency to expansion.

I am justified, by passing events, in saying that all of our banks have been directed with more than the average degree of prudence and wisdom; and it is a matter of pride that the monetary system of Louisiana is so exceptionally good, as to have elicited the particular notice of the leading minds of the country.

Since my last communication to the Legislature, the domestic affairs of the Federal Government have been, by evil-disposed persons, seriously disturbed.

In the Territory of Utah a remarkable state of things exists. An absolute politico-religious despotism has been established; over a portion of the common territory set apart for the homes of freemen, a union of Church and State of the most despicable form has been carried into practical effect. Superstition has consolidated power, and placed it in the hands of a man who now openly defies the authority of the Government. United States troops have been ordered to the scene of rebellion; and it is not an irrational prediction to say that the clang of arms will soon be heard through the quiet valleys of the West. Should the anticipated emergency arise, and should circumstances require it, I know the people of Louisiana will exhibit their well-known traits of patriotism, and promptly offer the power of their State to aid the Federal authorities in restoring quiet, and re-establishing its legitimate control over the Territory of Utah.

Events have been and now are occurring in the Territory of Kansas, which seem to render civil war and bloodshed inevitable. The indications are that a portion of the people residing there have

resolved upon factiously defeating every attempt made by the law-abiding portion of the community to dispose of this fruitful field of agitation by admitting Kansas as a State into the Union. A Constitutional Convention, elected under the authority and in accordance with the formalities of a law passed by the Territorial Legislature, assembled at Lecompton in October, 1857, and closed its session in December of the same year. That Convention undoubtedly had the right to submit, or not, the Constitution which it framed to the popular vote for ratification or rejection. In the exercise of its right, the Convention, animated by a spirit of justice and fairness—characteristics unknown to those who oppose its action—and with a desire to finally settle the question of slavery in Kansas, submitted that clause alone to a vote of the people. That vote was taken on the 21st of December last, and resulted in the adoption of the slavery clause.

Kansas has now assumed all the attributes of a sovereign State, and demands and is entitled to an admission into the Union as an equal of the other States. It is to be hoped that the Congress of the United States, aided by the voices of the patriotic citizens of every State, will make conjoint effort with our experienced Chief Magistrate to remove this disturbing question from the halls of Congress, by the speedy admission of Kansas, under her present Constitution, to the benefits and privileges of our cherished Confederacy. I know of no other mode by which to give this matter a quiet and satisfactory adjustment, agreeable alike to the South and the conservative sentiment of the North. The theory of non-intervention by Congress, or *other Federal authority*, with the question of slavery in the Territories, is coming to a practical solution; while the great principle of popular sovereignty is working out its legitimate results. Under its operation, three new States are prepared to take their places in the Confederacy: their people, by a direct vote, or through their representatives, duly empowered, have determined the nature of their domestic institutions satisfactorily to themselves; and if, on examination, their fundamental laws prove to be republican in form, and not in conflict with the Constitution of the United States, it only remains for Congress to enroll their names upon the list of States, as co-equals thereof in every respect. This is what the Southern States will require of their agents in Congress, whether the new States to be admitted have established slavery or not; this is the

extent of the demands of the South upon their Northern brethren. We ask nothing but the practical application of the doctrine of *Non-intervention*. We could not, consistently with our obligations to the Union, ask more; less we cannot take, and preserve our honor and Constitutional rights.

A statesman is in the President's chair, chosen, in the main, by the people of the South. In his recommendations to Congress, he has gone far to do us justice in a matter most concerning our future growth.

The abrogation of the Clayton Bulwer Treaty is an object much to be desired by the South. It would open the way to the successful application of the celebrated Monroe doctrine to the affairs of American governments, and to the exclusion, in the future, of the interference of European despots, in matters exclusively affecting the interests of the people and governments so interfered with. It is clearly manifest that the Southern States of this Union must look Southward for that expansion of the slavery area, so necessary for the maintenance of the equilibrium of the United States Senate, and for the future progress of their agricultural prosperity. It is just and right that the Federal Government and the Northern States bow to the immutable decrees of a natural law, and not resist the South in the spread of her institutions to regions so palpably pointed to, by the finger of destiny, for her occupation.'

The doctrine of State rights, the corner-stone of our system of government, the great bulwark against centralization in a purely representative republic, appears to be making steady progress.

The remnant of a political organization which once devoted itself wholly to the national idea, and which lately enlarged so much on the value of the Union, at any cost, seems now to be striving to outstrip the Democracy in its devotion to the rights of the individual States.

The cardinal principal of our system is, that we are not one nation, with a supreme government at Washington, but an aggregation of thirty-one sovereign nations, with a central agency *there*, entrusted, for convenience, with certain specified powers. And it is a matter for congratulation that this, the *true intent* of the framers of the Constitution, is becoming more and more familiar with the people of all classes, and of every political hue.

As the South is necessarily a unit upon all the great subjects of National politics, it behoves the Legislature to turn its attention to those great objects of State policy which have been so long neglected. It is, after all, the State Legislature which most concerns the individual citizen, and there is great need of thorough reorganization of the various departments of the Government. The time is propitious for effecting such changes as you, in your wisdom, may find necessary and proper, and my hearty co-operation will be given to every effort which will tend to increase the effective power of the State, and reduce the burdens of the people.

ROBERT C. WICKLIFFE.

Louisiana - Governor.

ANNUAL MESSAGE

OF

Robert C. Wickliffe,

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA,

TO THE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
JAN 18 1944
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA.

BATON ROUGE:
J. M. TAYLOR, STATE PRINTER.
1860.

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1860.

MESSAGE

OF THE

Governor of the State of Louisiana.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives
of the State of Louisiana:

The condition of the State Treasury, according to the Report of the Auditor, shows a balance, on the 1st of January, 1860, of $133,696 09, to the credit of the General Fund.

The receipts into the State Treasury for the ensuing year for account of the General Fund, are estimated at $1,205,000. Making a sum total of $1,338,696 09.

The estimated expenditures for the same period, including the unexpended balances, amount to $1,174,553 32. Showing a balance to the credit of that fund on the 31st of March, 1861, of $164,142 77; exhibiting a far more prosperous condition of the finances of the State than has been presented for eight years.

It will, therefore, be seen that, without increasing the rate of taxation, the annually increasing revenues of the State will enable her to meet promptly all the wants of Government.

INVESTMENTS OF TRUST FUNDS.

The following investments of the Trust Funds of the State were made during the year 1859:

Free School Fund.

111 City Bonds of $1,000 each, at a cost of.....$97,879 50

Redemption of State Debt Fund.

25 State Bonds, of $500 each, at a cost of.....$11,489 50

These Bonds, at their par value, having preference over all others.

BONDS ISSUED TO RAILROAD COMPANIES DURING THE YEAR 1859.

To the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad Company, 10 Bonds of $1,000.....$10,000 00
Issued previously, 621 Bonds of $1,000.....621,000 00

Total amount issued.....$631,000 00

To the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad Company, (none issued)
Issued previously, 884 Bonds of $1,000 .....$884,000 00

Total amount issued.....$884,000 00

To the Vicksburg, Shreveport and Texas Railroad Company, 29 Bonds of $1,000.....$29,000 00
Issued previously, 174 Bonds of $1,000.....174,000 00

Total amount issued.....$203,000 00

To the Baton Rouge, Opelousas and Grosse Tete Railroad, 5 Bonds of $1,000.....$5,000 00
Previously issued.....56,000 00

Total amount issued $61,000 00

RECAPITULATION.

Bonds issued during 1859, 44 Bonds of $1,000..... $44,000 00
Previously issued, 1,735 Bonds of $1,000.....1,735 000 00

Total.....$1,779,000 00

ESTIMATE FILED IN AUDITOR'S OFFICE OF BONDS REQUIRED FOR THE YEAR 1860.

By the Vicksburg, Shreveport and Texas Railroad Company..$113,311 00
By the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad Company.... ..... 111,000 00
By the Baton Rouge, Grosse Tete and Opelousas Railroad Company..... 19,000 00
By the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad Company..... 50,000 00

Total estimate, 293 Bonds $293,311 00

You will perceive that the total amount of Bonds issued by the State to Railroad Companies amount to $1,779,000. No provision has yet been made for the ultimate payment of these Bonds at maturity, or for the payment of $483,000 Bonds issued to the New Orleans and Nashville Railroad Company, due 1st April, 1867—and $100,000 bonds issued to the Mexican Gulf Railroad, due in 1870. I now renew the recommendation in my last annual message, that the Legislature take the necessary steps to provide for these debts of the State, by the creation of a *Reserved Fund*, to be appropriated to that purpose, and would suggest that this fund might be provided without the necessity of a resort to any increase of taxation. The Internal Improvement Tax Fund, which was created for the purpose of meeting the interest on the bonds issued to the railroad companies, and fixed at one-fourth of one mill on the dollar, or 25 cents on $1,000, it is found meets the interest on the bonds, and leaves a surplus annually in the Treasury ; that surplus now amounts to near $100,000, and it is estimated will be increased by the 1st of January, 1861, about $50,000. By creating a fund for the " Redemption of Bonds issued to Railroad Companies," and investing the present surplus of the Internal Improvement Tax Fund in the Bonds of the State, annually appropriating the surplus that may appear to the Internal Improvement Tax Fund, and semi-annually investing in like manner the interest accruing on the bonds held by the " Redemption Fund, and permanently fixing the Internal Improvement Tax at its present low rate, it is believed will very nearly, if not entirely, liquidate the debt of the State for account of Railroad Companies.

RAILROADS.

But little progress has been made in the extension of our principal Railroads, since my last annual message. The New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad remains completed as far as Canton, Mississippi, and the road way formation, for the first twenty-six miles, north of Canton, will soon be ready for receiving the superstructure and iron.

This corporation has always held a leading position among our Railroad enterprises. Its form of organization, its financial schemes and its general policy have been more or less adopted by other companies and, for the most part, with advantage. It has probably been managed with less prudence and economy than some other railroad works, but at the same time the road has been pressed forward with zeal, energy and fertility of recourses, under pressing difficulties, seldom equaled in any section of our country.

This Railroad is completed 206 miles, intersecting the Mississippi Central Railroad at Canton, thus securing to New Orleans an unbroken railroad communication with the whole railroad system of the United States, and at once realizing the anticipations of the original projectors.

Although so much has been accomplished, yet only one half the labor

undertaken by the company has been performed; their plan was to build a continuous railroad to the Tennessee river, 410 miles from the city of New Orleans. On reaching Canton, however, the Company find they have exhausted their available subscriptions, and have contracted on long time a bonded debt of $3,000,000. Under these circumstances the Company are admonished that their franchises in Mississippi determine by law in March 1862, and that it will be necessary to procure an extension of time in order to recruit its resources and establish a financial credit equal to the magnitude of the work yet to be performed. In view of these facts, propositions of the most unfriendly nature have been introduced into the Legislature of the State of Mississippi at its present sitting, whereby it is proposed that the necessary relief should not be granted, except under conditions of the most humiliating nature and utterly subversive of the credit and future existence of the Corporation. What is most remarkable is that this movement is not supported by the rival railroad interests of Missis3ippi, but by those who should be the fast friends of our enterprise, those who represent the counties traversed by the proposed Railroad, north of Canton, those who, of all others, are most interested in, and anxious for the extension of the Railroad, impatient, as it would appear, at unavoidable delay, suspicious of the honest purposes of the Company to complete their work and perform faithfully other obligations to the State of Mississippi, this unnatural course, has, it may be inferred, been adopted with the view of intimidating the corporation, driving it from its manifest policy, and thereby making it more certain of local interest.

I will be able to lay before you at an early day the documentary evidence which has suggested the foregoing remarks. No Legislature is responsible for matter which may be laid before it, however unreasonable or unjust, but only for its action on such matter. I feel the highest confidence that the Legislature of Mississippi will not knowingly do an unjust, or unfriendly act towards this corporation; but in view of the magnitude of the interest involved in maintaining, unimpaired, the credit and efficiency of the company, and placing its corporate perpetuity and the validity of its contracts beyond all future doubt or cavil, I would earnestly recommend that the State of Mississippi be officially requested to grant to said company sufficient additional time to complete their railroad, and that no forfeiture of franchise shall attach to any portion of the said railroad which has been or may be hereafter faithfully completed.

The New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad is completed to Berwick Bay, where it unites with a tri-weekly line of steamers which run from the Bay to Galveston. The Board of Directors have placed a considerable amount of additional work under contract, west of Berwick Bay, and have a well matured financial scheme for the completion of their great enterprise, which terminates at Thompson's Bluffs, on the Sabine River; after crossing the river the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great

Western Railroad unites with the Texas Great Western, and the Sabine and Rio Grande Railroads; the former running North-westwardly and connecting with the Southern Pacific Railroad, at its crossing on the Brazos River; and the latter southwestardly, nearly parallel with the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, to San Antonio. The prudent management of the affairs of this company and the liberality of the State of Texas, in the granting of franchise, subscriptions and substantial endowments to her railroads leading to our western border, secures a bright prospect for the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad Company, inestimable blessings to a large portion of the people of Louisiana and Texas, and oriental wealth to the commerce of New Orleans.

The Vicksburg, Shreveport and Texas Railroad is progressing. The first twenty miles from Vicksburg are in daily use, and it is anticipated that the first grand division of the road will be finished and ready for transporting the next cotton crop of that district. The construction of the entire line of the railroad to its union with the Southern Pacific Railroad on the Texas border, has been contracted for by responsible parties, and the work will be prosecuted as rapidly as the financial abilities of the company will permit. It is true much less work has been done on this line of railroad than on the two railroads before reviewed, but it must be remembered that the Vicksburg and Shreveport Railroad passes through a comparatively new and thinly settled country, and that it has not, like the Great Northern and Great Western Railroads, received powerful aid in the form of private and city corporate subscription. As the road progresses the valuable donations of public lands, made by Congress (though impaired by Act of Congress of 3d March, 1857,) will become valuable assets for future extension; besides the country is increasing daily in population and wealth, which additional resources taken in connection with the immense western travel which will follow the completion of the Southern railroad from Vicksburg towards Montgomery, and the extension of the Southern Pacific, westward, must at no distant day insure the completion of this great highway, than which none in the State has been conceived in a higher spirit of self-reliant enterprise, or prosecuted with more prudence, ability and industry.

The Baton Rouge and Grosse Tête Railroad, when regarded in connection with the proposed New Orleans and Baton Rouge Railroad, and its present contemplated extension towards Alexandria and Opelousas, rises to a high position in our railroad system. The road has been well managed from the beginning, and all its available resources will be faithfully applied to the extension of the road beyond the Bayou Grosse Tête. The Directors of this enterprise have adopted the true policy, which should govern all our railroad companies; they have increased their negro forces so as to be independent of other labor, and are now most actively engaged in the proposed extension.

It is a source of gratification to inform you that, within my knowledge, the State has not in a single instance granted its aid to an unworthy enterprise, or to one which is not at present entirely solvent, and which will not realize all the benefits anticipated by the most sanguine projectors. In due time I will place before you the various reports of all the railroads in which the State is a stockholder.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CURRENCY—THE BANKS.

It affords me great satisfaction again to place before the Legislature the workings of our Banking system, as exhibited in the accompanying report of the Board of Currency for the past year. With the fixed specie basis, not regulated by the fluctuations of commerce, it may be proudly said that our laws regulating the currency, have secured for the State of Louisiana, the true Federal standard, wherewith to measure the products of our industry and of our vast interior trade, and our paper money has in *reality* become the certificates of gold and silver, convertible on demand.

I hope the Legislature will watch, with a jealous eye, any intentional deviation from the wise provisions of law governing our Banks, or any change in the checks and safeguards thrown around our present Banking system. Whilst our laws are stringent in their provisions as regards the management of our monetary institutions, the security thus given to the public, has in no wise destroyed their efficiency in affording the customary facilities to commerce, as evidenced by their regular annual dividends of from eight to fifteen per cent. The Act passed by the last Legislature, requiring weekly statements to be made by the Banks through the Board of Currency, has been put into operation and found to work well. This regulation gives additional guarantees, on the part of the Banks, by causing the balances to be paid every Saturday in coin, under the immediate superintendence of the State authorities, instead of leaving this important matter to the voluntary action of the Banks.

No addition to our Banking capital has been made during the year; but the Citizens' Bank has established a Branch at Shreveport, to which it has transferred $100,000 of its capital. The location of this Branch, in the center of an immense agricultural country, shut out, during low water, from all communication with the city of New Orleans, will doubtless prove of great advantage to a large portion of our North-western parishes, in facilitating the movement of their crop to market.

STATE ENGINEER.

I refer you for information to the general report of the State Engineer for the operations of that department, up to the 2d day of January, 1860, the day on which the present Board of Public Works organized. From his

report you will at once perceive the indebtedness of that department, and the necessity of prompt action on the part of the Legislature to discharge that indebtedness. This will facilitate the new Board in their future transactions, and at the same time terminate finally the connection of that officer with that branch of government, with which he has been so long and favorably connected.

SWAMP LAND COMMISSIONERS.

The reports from the four Swamp Land Commissioners will place you in full possession of their labors for the past year. Many of the important works ordered by the last Legislature have been completed, and some are in an incomplete state, owing to their magnitude and the shortness of the season adapted to Levee work.

Upon the very important subject of Levees, I most respectfully renew the recommendations made by me last year to your predecessors. No object of greater moment can claim your attention.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

This elaborote document will give all the information necessary to a full understanding of the condition of our Public Schools. The entire system of public education requires remodeling.

STATE SEMINARY OF LEARNING.

I earnestly recommend to your favorable consideration the State Seminary of Learning, established and now under military organization near Alexandria.

The State of Louisiana has been most fortunate in the selection of the corps of professors, who now have charge of this Institution. An annual appropriation from the General School Fund of twenty-five thousand dollars, would endow this Institution and place it upon a lasting and solid foundation. In consideration of which the Institution could educate forty-eight young men annually (one from each parish of the State) who should bind themselves after the completion of their education, to teach a common school for two years. By this arrangement we would have teachers born and reared in our midst, identified in feeling and interest with our institutions, and not be, as we are now, dependent upon other States for public school teachers.

I urge upon the Legislature the passage of a law fixing, at once, the military character of this Institution, and recommend the necessary appropriation to establish and build in connection therewith, a depot for arms and munitions of war.

NORMAL SCHOOL, NEW ORLEANS.

Your particular attention is invited to the Report of the Directors of the Normal School of New Orleans, embraced in the Report of the Superintendent of Public Education. This school is certainly worthy of your liberality and fostering care.

STATE LIBRARY.

I cannot close my last annual message without paying a passing notice to Mr. Droz, the able and most efficient Librarian; a worthy, old public servant, who has devoted the best years of his life to his department, who by his activity and industry, has given to the State of Louisiana a Library of which she may well be proud.

BOARD OF HEALTH.

The Report of the Board of Health, which I place before you, presents many interesting features and is well worthy of your consideration.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind continues to prosper, and now ranks among the most flourishing in the United States. Industrial employments have been introduced, and among them, as required by Act of the last Legislature, printing; in which the pupils have made remarkable proficiency. Should you employ their willing and grateful labor, as I respectfully recommend, in the publication of a Library, for the use of the District Schools, the otherwise necessary expenditures of this Institution would be greatly reduced, and an immense benefit conferred on all children attending our common schools.

The report of the Insane Asylum, at Jackson, will place you in full possession of information relative to its management for the past year, and its wants for the present. I can not forego the pleasure of saying that this institution is the best managed, and the cheapest institution of the kind in the Union, and speaks well for the liberality and generosity of the State of Louisiana.

I commend to your most favorable consideration the report of the Board of Administrators of the Charity Hospital. The Board of Directors and officers of that Institution have discharged their trust with great fidelity.

TRIAL OF SLAVES CHARGED WITH CAPITAL OFFENSES.

I have heretofore called the attention of the Legislature to the law in relation to the trial of slaves charged with capital offenses. This subject, which I deem of great importance, has failed to attract the attention of

your predecessors. It now earnestly demands and should receive your attention. The manner in which slaves are now tried, by a special tribunal established for that purpose, results in sending many of them to the State Prison for offenses slight and trivial, whereas if the administration of justice was, in these cases, confined to the District Courts and juries, punishment would be as certain. I would recommend the repeal of the law which inflicts upon a slave the punishment of confinement in the State Penitentiary.

FREE NEGROES, AND SLAVES WHO HIRE THEIR OWN TIME.

Act No. 87, passed by the last General Assembly to prevent the migration of free negroes from other States into this, though thus far zealously enforced, has not accomplished its object. The many means of avoiding the provisions of this act, by the designing and cunning, will readily present themselves, upon even a casual examination of the law.

There is another subject to which I would here call your attention. With the best intentions, certainly without calculating the evil tendency of the practice, many of our slave holders have fallen into the pernicious custom of allowing them to hire their own time, or, in other words, extending to them liberties and privileges totally inconsistent with their proper condition and good government. The influence of such example on our slave population is most ruinous, and should be checked by the most stringent laws, made to reach both master and slave.

TERMS OF THE SUPREME COURT.

The law which compels the Supreme Court to hold three separate terms, out of the city of New Orleans, requires amendment. It would be well for the Legislature to fix by law upon some one point out of the city, at which the three terms might be merged into one. This would give to our Judges that relaxation from their arduous duties which is naturally demanded.

GOVERNOR'S MANSION.

I would urge upon the General Assembly the propriety of providing, at the Capital, an Executive Mansion.

On the eve of resigning into the hands of my successor, the duties and responsibilities of the office of Governor, I feel that I can, without indelicacy make this suggestion, and need only say in its support, that it would be but becoming in the great State of Louisiana to offer to her Chief Magistrates, during their terms of administration, a residence suitable to the position.

NORTHERN AGENTS.

Allow me to present for your consideration an increasing, rapidly growing evil.

In almost every town and village of our State, are to be seen agents, representatives of large business houses, from the North, who are daily selling, from samples exhibited, goods, wares and merchandize, without paying that license for the support of State government which is demanded and annually collected from our own merchants. I recommend the passage of stringent laws to prevent this species of traffic.

HASTY LEGISLATION.

I would most respectfully impress upon the consideration of the Legislature the evils attending hasty Legislation. It may, with perfect safety be said, that three-fourths of the Acts of the General Assembly which are presented to the Governor for his signature, are passed within the last ten days of each session, thus forcing upon him the duty of approving or withholding his signature to Acts it is physically impossible for him to read with that care and attention which judicious legislation requires; this suggestion is forced upon me by the experience of the last four years; it is not just that this responsibility should be thrown upon the Executive.

FEDERAL RELATIONS.

I had hoped to retire from the exalted position with which the people of the commonwealth have honored me without extended reference to national affairs or national politics. I had fondly wished that I might bring my administration to a close with a simple, yet favorable allusion to those subjects. It is, however, with profound regret that I feel constrained to announce to you my hopes in this respect have been blighted, and that I deem it my solemn duty, as your Chief Magistrate and representative of the people, to enlarge upon a disagreeable topic. Its importance demands my best attention and commands your closest consideration.

The times that are upon us are rapidly precipitating a crisis which must be met manfully. In any event, I know that the people of Louisiana will not be found wanting in a practical vindication of their assailed rights, and a proper defense of their honor. The times and the crisis to which I have alluded, I apprehend will bring into requisition all the qualities indispensable to the vindication of the one and the defense of the other. The character of Louisiana has not yet been stained with servility or dishonor, and I know her people in the present, like her people in the past, would gladly accept any alternative which carries with it honor and insures self-respect, than take a position which might secure temporary profit at the sacrifice of every principle of manhood, every element of independence,

every attribute of that lofty sovereignty upon which we have so justly prided ourselves. And when it is taken into consideration that submission will hardly assure temporary security—for compacts with cravens are invariably broken by the stronger party the very instant they have answered their purposes—that aggression after aggression invariably succeeds each compromise of constitutional right and submission to wrong—it is not possible that Louisiana will abate one jot or tittle of her inalienable prerogatives, or swerve in the least from the true, just, and patriotic position she has ever nobly occupied.

My views in regard to the most important home questions are well known to the public and to you. In my inaugural address, and in the annual messages I have since had the honor to lay before the General Assembly, pursuant to the requirements of the Constitution, I have expressed myself at such length and in such a manner as I deemed appropriate. My opinions, therein expressed, have undergone no change, save that which facts and unmistakable circumstances naturally work in the minds of all patriotic citizens. He who learns nothing from the current of passing events, and clings exclusively to the memories of a purer age, and obstinately closes his eyes, heart and brain to the stern actualities of the present, is an unsafe counselor, and if invested with authority, would lead any State or nation into disgrace or ruin if circumstances permitted the exercise of his destructive proclivities. As times change, men change, and as men make up the aggregate of communities and nations, communities and nations must also change, to meet well the emergencies of the times as they present themselves. Nothing is immutable, save the laws of God and nature.

For more than a quarter of a century a sectional warfare, based upon hatred of the institution of slavery, has been waged by the North upon the South. At the outset, the members of this despicable organization were contemptible in number and in intellect; and their fanatical, treasonable and atrocious promulgations were deemed as fit subjects for mirth in both sections of the Confederacy. At that time each State respected its constitutional obligations, the comity of the respective sovereignties was maintained, brotherhood and good feeling prevailed well nigh universally—all the South requires now, or wanted then, was the simple observance of the organic compact, which was cheerfully rendered on all sides—the most beneficent system of government the earth ever knew, when rightfully administered: a union of sovereignties under a confederated head, armed with expressly delegated powers, worked so beautifully and harmoniously that it was the wonder and admiration of the world. It grieves me to say that this happy picture has been changed; that the small band of fanatics, once only deemed fit subjects for laughter, have grown into a powerful organization; that the cloud, once a mere speck upon the horizon, has attained such dimensions that it blackens the skies of the majority section

of the Confederacy; that sovereign States, through their Legislatures and Governors, have passed laws which set at defiance the Constitution of the United States; which nullify the laws of Congress; which trample under foot the decisions of the Federal Court of last resort, and which openly contemn the executive authority of the government, when exercised in strict conformity to the demands of the Constitution. All this is done too without cause, provocation or warrant of any kind. The slave-holding States have not wronged, nor attempted to wrong their Northern brethren in any manner, and in all controversies they have been the first to yield; they have compromised and compromised, for the sake of peace, when they had rights and interests at stake and the North had none—but every yielding, and each compromise, has been followed by fresh demands and renewed aggression, until fanaticism grown bold by our yielding and compromises, as well as by the wondrous growth of its power in the North, now says in the Federal Senate, in the Hall of the House of Representatives and from the Legislatures of most of the non-slave-holding States, backed by an overwhelmning preponderance of the masses, almost sufficient to elect a President, that not another slave State shall ever be admitted into the Union—no matter what the circumstances of the case—no matter what the obligations imposed by one common organic law.

A great, bad man—great in intellect and fearfully great in influence—the foreordained candidate of the Black Republicans for the Presidency, not twelve months ago announced, in his place in the United States Senate, that his party would soon have control of the Government, and that they would then "re-organize the Supreme Court" in such a manner as would lead to decisions agreeable to themselves. Afterwards, in several speeches, made in his own State, on the eve of a general election, in presence of immense assemblages of the people, he distinctly declared that there was an irrepressible conflict between the free labor of the North and the slave labor of the South, and that the South must become free or the North slave. A few days after the delivery of these addresses, the government of the mightiest State of the Union passed, by an overwhelmning majority of the people, into the hands of those who agreed with him in opinion.

What is true of New York is true when applied to many of the non-slave-holding States; the gloomy pall of Abolitionism overshadows nearly all; and, if we are to take the past as a criterion for the future, it is almost useless to look beyond Mason and Dixon's line for relief, unless the South presents for the Presidency a man so unexceptionable as to command respect and support among all good men. And with this as her ultimatum, the last alternative she will ever present: "Shall this man, unobjectionable in other respects, be rejected merely because his home is in the South? If so, we should know it, and the sooner the better."

But one party—the Democratic party—remains to fight the battle for the Constitution and the Union, as our forefathers framed it. That party,

however, notwithstanding its services to the country, the great men it has produced, its claims to general support, its magnificent past and its splendid promises for the future, is in a minority in the majority section of the Confederacy. Its banner has been bravely defended, and there are still gallant spirits in the North who will fight around it to the death. Yet its folds, almost everywhere in that section of the country, are trailed in the dust of defeat. It were idle to close our eyes to these facts—and what would be derelict in a citizen becomes criminal in a public officer. I am determined to discharge *my* duty—the rest remains with you—and to your wisdom and discretion I confidently commit it.

The Harper's Ferry disturbance is a case in point, which significantly indicates the mode of warfare which constantly accumulating thousands propose to wage upon us. The numbers actively engaged in it were insignificant; but when we take into consideration that they committed the crimes of treason and murder, and were provided to equip with arms for the work of death, several thousand slaves or other confederates; that the general press and people of the extreme North, on various grounds, sympathised with the traitors and murderers and solicited their pardon, we cannot close our eyes to the inauspicious condition of affairs.

The State of Virginia has nobly vindicated her laws and brought the traitors to condign punishment. This is gratifying, although it was nothing more than was to be expected from the proud old mother of sages and statesmen. But, whilst we acknowledge and commend all this, is there not something more than words required from the less exposed slave-holding States? The battle for our rights, and in defense of our institutions, is to be fought, must be fought, in the border States where slavery exists. It would be cowardice, as well as penuriousness, to leave them to fight the battle alone, which, in more than one sense, is our battle as much as theirs; we should give them actual sympathy, positive support. Virginia, a slave-holding border State, has been invaded. The sovereignty of Virginia has been properly vindicated by Virginia. To do this she asked, needed no assistance. But it cost her money to crush and punish the enemies of the South. To assure her, as well as the other border slave States, of the active cöoperation of Louisiana; to show them that we recognize their cause as our cause, I recommend the immediate appropriation by the Legislature of twenty-five thousand dollars, as Louisiana's quota toward these expenses, accompanied by a solemn pledge that our State will stand by her sister Southern States to the utmost extent of the men and means she can command, in any course they may see proper to adopt to secure our Constitutional rights.

Having now as briefly as possible glanced at affairs as they exist, it may be expected that I should suggest some remedy. It is said that there is a cure for all ills; whether there is a cure for the fanaticism which afflicts the Northern portion of the country I have my doubts. Unless

its course be checked there can be no restoration of that good feeling between the two sections which is the only hope for the preservation of the Union in its integrity. The common enemy must, therefore, be confronted and beaten back; his approach must not be waited for; that, in my opinion, would be ruinous. I believe it has been the fault of the South from the beginning; had we never compromised away a constitutional right, we would not be situated as we now are.

I recommend a complete re-organization of the militia. Pass a law so clear, stringent and comprehensive that evasion would be impossible, which would compel the formation and drill of one or more volunteer companies, in proportion to population, in every Parish in the State. Let the State provide them with arms and establish armories. The State should provide for the equipment of her own men, in all respects, within herself, so as to be independent, should the hour of trial come, of all outside assistance. A sovereignty that is incapable of doing this, or being capable, is, under the present circumstances unwilling, is unfit to exercise rights of sovereignty. I am sure Louisiana will never prove recreant, hence the generality of my recommendations. If my suggestions are carried out, the State will be put upon a war footing, at a small expense, and will be prepared to meet any emergency.

I would further recommend that the General Assembly pass laws for the encouragement of domestic industry and enterprise of every description. We are a nation within ourselves, superabundantly endowed with every element of wealth and greatness, provided it is fostered and promoted by the wisdom of its Legislation and the skill and industry of our citizens.

Several of the slave States have proposed, in a certain contingency, a Congress or convention for consultation and the adoption of means of mutual safety. As the meeting of such a body would violate no law, infringe no right, and might be advantageous, I recommend that Louisiana meet her Southern sister States in that or any other body she may be called upon to participate in. It would be manifest discourtesy in her to refuse to counsel in the hour of danger with those whose interests are identical with her own.

It has been said, in view of the embittered hostility of the North to us and the institution of slavery, that retaliatory measures should be adopted in self-defense. In this there is much reason and truth, and if Southern Legislatures can retaliate, without a violation of law, they will be recreant to their duty if they do not do so. The North, its population considered, is a dependent section of the country; it exports comparatively nothing of its own products, and imports nearly every thing. It trades on other peoples capital. It lives by the use of the products of the South; without the patronage of the South, well nigh universal bankruptcy would ensue. The South, importing hardly any thing, exports, in fact, three-fourths of the products of the country, which pay the debts of the country. If the

cotton crop of the South were to fail, for a single year, there would not be a solvent bank capitalist, manufacturer or ship owner in the entire North. No business man will controvert this proposition.

How are we to retaliate?

Distinguished jurists, men learned in the law, have expressed the deliberate opinion that the Legislature of any State can, by a system of licensing, or by special taxation, inflict such discrimination upon goods, *when exposed for sale* within their jurisdiction, as will amount to absolute prohibition. On this point I express no positive opinion, and only suggest the subject, it having been favorably mentioned in high quarters. Yet, I deem it worthy your consideration, for if you find the proposition entirely legal, and conclude to adopt it, it will have the effect of making New Orleans the largest importing, as she is now the largest exporting city on the continent. State discrimination against every thing manufactured in those States warring upon our institutions, or imported there and brought here, which would approach the line of prohibition, would necessarily superinduce direct importation.

I need not dilate upon the immense advantages which would enure to the State by making New Orleans the great importing, as she now is the exporting metropolis of the Union. She would immediately become the center of exchanges, and her revenues to the treasury, at the present rates of taxation, would, in a decade, far exceed those now paid by the entire State.

And now, gentlemen, through you, I tender to a generous people, the thanks of a grateful heart. ROBERT C. WICKLIFFE.

Louisiana Governor,

MESSAGE ANNUEL

Gr. Wickcliffe

DE

Robert C. Wickliffe,

GOUVERNEUR DE L'ETAT DE LA LOUISIANE,

A

L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
JAN 18 1944
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BATON ROUGE:
J. M. TAYLOR, IMPRIMEUR D'ETAT
1860.

MESSAGE ANNUEL

DE

Robert C. Wickliffe,

GOUVERNEUR DE L'ETAT DE LA LOUISIANE,

A

L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE.

BATON ROUGE:
J. M. TAYLOR, IMPRIMEUR D'ETAT
1860.

MESSAGE

DU

Gouverneur de l'Etat de la Louisiane.

Messieurs du Sénat et de la Chambre des Représentants de l'Etat de la Louisiane :

La condition du Trésor de l'Etat, suivant le Rapport de l'Auditeur de l'Etat, indique une balance le 1er janvier 1860 de $133,690 09 au crédit du Fonds Général.

Les recettes du Trésor d'Etat pour l'année suivante au compte du Fonds Général sont estimées à $1,205,000. Faisant une somme totale de $1,338,696 09.

Les dépenses estimées pour la même période, comprenant les balances inattendues, s'élèvent à $1,174,553 32, ce qui indique une balance au crédit de ce fonds à la date du 31 mars 1861, de $164,142 77 ; cela prouve que les finances de l'Etat sont dans une condition bien plus prospère que celle des huit dernières années.

On verra, en conséquence, que, sans accroitre le taux des taxes, les revenus de l'Etat s'accroissant annuellement lui permettront de répondre promptement à tous les besoins du Gouvernement.

PLACEMENT DES FONDS DE GERANCE.

Les placements suivants des fonds confiés à la gérance de l'Etat ont é opérés pendant l'année 1859 :

Fonds des Ecoles Publiques.

111 obligations de la ville de $1,000 chacune, au prix de....$97,879 50

Rachat de la Dette de l'Etat.

25 obligations de l'Etat, de $500 chacune, au prix de.....$14,489 50

Ces obligations, à leur valeur au pair, ayant la préférence sur toutes les autres.

OBLIGATIONS LIVREES AUX COMPAGNIES DE CHEMIN DE FER PENDANT L'ANNEE 1859.

A la Compagnie du Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle Orléans, des Opelousas et de l'Ouest, 10 obligations de $1000	$10,000 00
Emis précédemment, 621 obligations de $1000	621,000 00
Montant total de l'émission	$631,000 00
A la Compagnie du Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, de Jackson et du Nord (aucune émission.)	
Emis précédemment, 884 obligations de $1000	$884,000 00
Montant total de l'émission	$884,000 00
A la Compagnie du Chemin de fer de Vicksburg, de Shreveport et du Texas, 29 obligations de $1000	$29,000 00
Emis précédemment 174 obligations de $1000	174,000 00
Montant total de l'émission	$203,000 00
Au Chemin de fer de Baton-Rouge, Opelousas et Grosse-Tête, 5 obligations de $1000	$5,000 00
Emis précédemment	56,000 00
Montant total de l'émission	$61,000 00

RECAPITULATION.

Obligations émises en 1859, 44 obligations de $1000	$44,000 00
Emis précédemment, 1,735 obligations de $1000	$1,735,000 00
Total	$1,779,000 00

ESTIMATION AU ROLE DU BUREAU DE L'AUDITEUR DES OBLIGATIONS REQUISES POUR L'ANNEE 1860.

Par la Compagnie du Chemin de fer de Vicksburg, de Shreveport et du Texas	$113,311 00
Par la Compagnie du Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, de Jackson et du Nord	111,000 00
Par la Compagnie du Chemin de fer de Baton-Rouge, Grosse-Tête et Opelousas	19,000 00
Par la Compagnie du Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, des Opelousas et de l'Ouest	$50,000 00
Total de l'estimation, 293 obligations.	$293,311 00

Vous verrez que le montant total des obligations émises par l'Etat aux compagnies de chemin de fer s'élève à $1,779,000. Aucune provision n'a encore été faite pour le paiement ultérieur de ces obligations à maturité, ou pour le paiement de $483,000 d'obligations émises à la Compagnie du Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans et de Nashville, dues le 1er avril 1857— et de $100,000 d'obligations émises pour le Chemin de fer du Golfe du Mexique, dues en 1870. Je renouvelle maintenant dans mon dernier message annuel la recommandation à la Législature de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour pourvoir à l'acquittement de ces dettes, par la création d'un *fonds de réserve*, qui serait appliqué à cet effet, et je suggérerai que ce fonds soit créé sans qu'il soit nécessaire de recourir à un accroissement de taxes. Le fonds des taxes pour améliorations intérieures, qui a été créé dans le but de faire face aux intérêts des obligations émises aux compagnies de chemin de fer, et fixé à un quart de "mill" par dollar, ou 25 cents par $1000, se trouve suffisant pour le paiement des intérêts des obligations et laisser un surplus annuellement dans le Trésor ; ce surplus monte maintenant à près de $100,000 et on estime qu'il sera accru au 1er janvier 1861 d'environ $50,000. En créant un fonds pour le "Rachat des obligations émises aux compagnies de chemins de fer," et en plaçant le surplus actuel du Fonds de Taxes des Améliorations Intérieures en obligations de l'Etat, en appropriant annuellement le surplus qui peut rester du Fonds de Taxes des Améliorations Intérieures, et en plaçant semi-annuellement de la même façon l'intérêt produit par les obligations afférentes au Fonds de Rachat, et en fixant d'une façon permanente la Taxe des Améliorations Intérieures au taux actuel peu élevé, il est à croire qu'on arrivera à liquider presque tout-à-fait, sinon entièrement, la dette contractée par l'Etat pour le compte des compagnies de chemins de fer.

Il a été fait peu de progrès dans l'extension de nos principaux chemins de fer, depuis mon dernier message annuel. Le Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, de Jackson et du Nord est complété jusqu'à Canton, Mississippi, et l'établissement de la voie pour les vingt-six premiers milles au nord de Canton sera bientôt complet pour la pose des rails.

Cette compagnie a toujours occupé une position élevée parmi nos entreprises de chemins de fer. La forme de son organisation, son système financier et sa marche générale ont été plus ou moins imités par d'autres compagnies, et pour la plupart, avec avantage. Elle a été probablement administrée avec moins de prudence et d'économie que d'autres travaux de chemins de fer, mais en même temps le chemin a été poussé avec un zèle, une énergie et une fertilité de ressources, en face de difficultés pressantes, qui ont été rarement égalés dans quelques parties de notre pays.

Ce chemin est complété sur un parcours de 206 milles, coupant le chemin de fer central du Mississippi à Canton, et assurant ainsi à la Nouvelle-Orléans une communication non interrompue de chemins de fer avec tout le

réseau des lignes des Etats-Unis, et réalisant tout d'abord les espérances des auteurs du projet primitif.

Bien qu'on ait accompli beaucoup, cependant une moitié seulement du travail entrepris par la Compagnie a été exécuté ; son plan était de construire un chemin de fer continu jusqu'à la rivière Tennessee, à 410 milles de la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans. En atteignant Canton, cependant, la Compagnie a trouvé qu'elle avait épuisé ses souscriptions disponibles et avait contracté à long terme une dette en obligations de $3,000,000. Dans ces circonstances, la Compagnie est avisée que ses franchises dans l'Etat du Mississippi expirent de par la loi en mars 1862, et qu'il lui sera nécessaire d'obtenir une prolongation de délai afin de se réaliser des ressources et d'établir un crédit financier égal à la grandeur de l'œuvre qui reste à exécuter. En regard de ces faits, des propositions de la nature la moins bienveillante ont été présentées à la Législature de l'Etat du Mississippi, à sa présente session, et on y propose de ne pas accorder le secours nécessaire, excepté à des conditions de la nature la plus humiliante et qui renverseraient entièrement le crédit et l'existence future de la corporation. Ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable, c'est que ce mouvement n'est pas appuyé par les intérêts des chemins de fer rivaux du Mississippi, mais par ceux qui devraient être les amis zélés de notre entreprise, ceux qui représentent les comtés traversés par la ligne projetée au Nord de Canton, ceux qui, de tous les autres, sont le plus intéressés au chemin de fer et le plus anxieux de voir le prolongement du chemin s'effectuer, impatients, comme il paraît d'un délai inévitable, soupçonneux de l'honnêteté des projets de la Compagnie pour compléter l'ouvrage et remplir fidèlement ses autres obligations envers l'Etat du Mississippi. Cette marche peu naturelle a, on peut l'induire, été adoptée en vue d'intimider la Compagnie et de la faire dévier de sa direction manifeste, et par là l'assujétir plus certainement à des intérêts locaux.

Je pourrai vous soumettre prochainement les documents qui m'ont suggéré les remarques précédentes. Aucune législature n'est responsable d'une mesure qui peut lui être soumise, quelque déraisonnable ou injuste qu'elle soit, mais seulement de sa décision au sujet de cette mesure. J'ai la plus haute confiance que la Législature du Mississippi ne fera pas, en connaissance de cause, un acte injuste ou hostile envers cette corporation ; mais, en vue de l'importance des intérêts qui exigent que le crédit et l'action de la Compagnie soient préservés intacts, et que la perpétuité de son existence comme corporation et la validité de ses contrats soient mis hors de tout doute ou de toute atteinte future, je recommanderais vivement que l'Etat du Mississippi fût officiellement requis d'accorder à ladite Compagnie un temps additionel suffisant pour compléter son chemin de fer, et qu'aucune forfaiture de franchise ne pesât sur aucune portion dudit chemin de fer qui a été ou pourra être plus tard fidèlement complétée.

Le Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, des Opelousas et de l'Ouest est complété jusqu'à la baie de Berwick, où il correspond avec une ligne tri-hebdomaire de steamers qui font le service de la baie à Galveston.

Le Conseil des Directeurs a placé une partie considérable de travail additionel en adjudication, à l'ouest de la baie de Berwick, et a un plan financier bien mûri pour l'achèvement de leur grande entreprise, qui se termine à Thompson's Bluffs, sur la rivière Sabine. Après avoir traversé la rivière, le chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, des Opelousas et de l'Ouest se relie au Grand Chemin de l'Ouest Texas et à celui de Sabine et de Rio Grande, le premier courant au nord-ouest et se reliant au Chemin Méridional du Pacifique, à la traverse de la rivière Brazos, et le dernier au sud-ouest, presque parallèlement au Golfe du Mexique jusqu'à San-Atonio. L'administration precédente des affaires de cette Compagnie et la libéralité de l'Etat du Texas à accorder des franchises, des souscriptions et des gratifications substantielles à ses chemins de fer qui conduisent à nos frontières de l'ouest, assurent un bel avenir à la Compagnie du Grand Chemin de fer de la Nouvelle-Orléans, des Opelousas et de l'Ouest, des avantages inestimables à une grande partie des populations de la Louisiane et du Texas, et des richesses orientales pour le commerce de la Nouvelle-Orléans.

Le Chemin de fer de Vicksburg, Shreveport et Texas est en cours d'exécution. Les vingt premiers milles à partir de Vicksburg sont en exploitation, et on espère que la première grande division du chemin sera finie et prête pour transporter la prochaine récolte de coton de ce district. La construction de la ligne entière du chemin jusqu'à sa jonction au Chemin de fer Méridional du Pacifique sur la frontière du Texas, a été soumissionnée par des personnes de responsabilité, et le travail sera poussé aussi rapidement que les moyens pécuniaires de la Compagnie le permettront. Il est vrai qu'on a exécuté beaucoup moins d'ouvrage sur cette ligne de chemin que sur les deux chemins précités, mais il faut se souvenir que le chemin de Vicksburg et Shreveport passe à travers une contrée comparativement nouvelle et peu peuplée, et qu'il n'a pas comme les grands chemins du Nord et de l'Ouest, reçu une aide puissante sous la forme de souscriptions privées ou émanant des villes. A mesure que la voie s'exécute, les importantes donations de terres publiques, faites par le Congrès, (bien que diminuées par l'Acte du Congrès du 3 mars 1857) deviendront des moyens précieux pour une extension future ; en outre le pays s'accroit journellement en population et en richesse, avec des ressources additionnelles qui seront fournies par la circulation immense de voyageurs vers l'Ouest, qui suivra l'achèvement du Chemin de fer du Sud de Vicksburg à Montgomery ; et l'extension du Pacifique Méridional à l'Ouest doit, dans un jour prochain, assurer le complément de cette grande voie de communication, dont on peut dire qu'aucune dans l'Etat n'a été conçue dans un esprit plus élevé d'entreprise hardie, ou poursuivie avec plus de prudence, d'habileté et d'industrie.

Le Chemin de fer de Baton-Rouge et de Grosse-Tête, apprécié en vue du

chemin proposé de la Nouvelle-Orléans et de Baton-Rouge et de son prolongement actuellement projeté vers Alexandrie et Opelousas, prend une place élevée dans notre système de chemin de fer. Le Chemin a été bien administré depuis l'origine, et toutes ses ressousces disponibles seront fidèlement appliquées au prolongement du chemin au-delà du Bayou Grosse-Tête. Les Directeurs de cette entreprise ont adopté la vraie ligne de conduite que devraient suivre toutes nos compagnies de chemins de fer ; ils ont augmenté leurs forces en nègres, de façon à se rendre indépendants de tout autre espèce de travail, et sont maintenant très-activement engagés dans l'exécution du prolongement proposé.

Ce m'est une source de gratification d'avoir à vous informer que, à ma connaissance, l'Etat n'a pas dans un seul cas accordé son secours à une entreprise qui ne la méritait pas, ou qui ne soit pas actuellement tout-à-fait solvable et qui ne promette pas de réaliser tous les bénéfices attendus par les plus confiants créateurs des projets. En temps opportun, je vous soumettrai les divers rapports de tous les chemins de fer dans lesquels l'Etat est actionnaire.

RAPPORT DU BUREAU DE CIRCULATION.—LES BANQUES.

J'éprouve une grande satisfaction à placer devant la Législature les travaux de notre système de banque, tels qu'ils résultent du rapport du Bureau de Circulation, pour l'année passée. Avec la base fixée d'espèces, indépendante des fluctuations du commerce, on peut dire avec orgueil que nos lois relatives à la circulation ont assuré pour l'Etat de la Louisiane le véritable titre pour mesurer les produits de notre industrie et de notre vaste commerce intérieur, et notre papier-monnaie est devenu en réalité le certificat d'or et d'argent, convertible sur demande.

J'espère que la Législature surveillera d'un œil jaloux toute déviation intentionnelle des sages clauses de la loi gouvernant nos banques, ou tout changement dans les précautions et les sauvegardes qui accompagnent notre système actuel de banque. Nos lois, toutes strictes qu'elles sont dans leurs clauses relatives à l'administration de nos institutions financières, ne nuisent en aucune manière à l'efficacité des banques ni à l'importance des secours qu'elles donnent au commerce. Cela est prouvé par les dividendes réguliers annuels qui s'élèvent de huit à quinze pour cent. L'acte passé par la Législature, requérant des états hebdomadaires dressés par les banques et soumis au Bureau de Circulation, a été mis en opération et trouvé excellent. Cette règle donne des garanties additionnelles de la part des banques, en faisant payer en espècee les balances de chaque semaine sous la surveillance immédiate des autorités d'Etat, au lieu de laisser cette importante matière à l'action volontaire des banques.

Aucune addition à notre capital de banques n'a été faite pendant l'année; mais la Banque des Citoyens a établi une branche à Shreveport, branche à laquelle elle a transféré $100,000 de son capital. La location de cette suc-

cursale dans le centre d'un immense pays agricole privé, pendant la saison des eaux basses, de toute communication avec la Nouvelle-Orléans, sera sans aucun doute d'un grand avantage pour une large portion de nos paroisses du nord-ouest, en facilitant le transport de leurs récoltes au marché.

INGENIEUR D'ETAT.

Je vous réfère, pour information, au rapport général de l'Ingénieur d'Etat pour les opérations de ce département, jusqu'au 2 de janvier 1860, jour même de l'organisation du Bureau actuel des Travaux Publics. Dans le rapport, vous verrez la gêne du département et la nécessité d'une prompte action de la part de la Législature pour lui venir en aide. Cela facilitera les transactions futures du nouveau Bureau et mettra finalement un terme à la connection de cet officier avec cette branche de gouvernement à laquelle il a été si longtemps et si heureusement attaché.

COMMISSAIRES DES TERRES MARECAGEUSES.

Les rapports des Commissaires des terres marécageuses vous mettront au courant des travaux de l'année passée. Beaucoup d'importants travaux, ordonnés par la Législature, ont été accomplis, et quelques-uns sont encore inachevés, par suite de leur étendue et de la brièveté de la saison bonne pour les travaux de levée.

Sur le très-important sujet des levées, je renouvelle respectueusement les recommandations que j'ai faites à vos prédécesseurs. Nulle question plus grave ne peut réclamer votre attention.

RAPPORT DU SURINTENDANT DE L'EDUCATION PUBLIQUE.

Ce document élaboré donne toutes les informations nécessaires à une pleine intelligence de la matière. Le système entier des écoles publiques demande à être réformé.

SEMINAIRE D'ETAT.

Je recommande vivement à votre considération le Séminaire d'Etat d'instruction, établi près d'Alexandrie, sous un système d'organisation militaire.

L'Etat de la Louisiane a été très-heureux dans le choix du corps des professeurs qui sont chargés maintenant de cette Institution. Une appropriation annuelle du fonds général d'écoles de $25,000, doterait cette Institution et la placerait sur une base solide et durable. En considération de quoi l'Institution pourrait élever quarante-huit hommes annuellement (un de chaque paroisse de l'Etat) qui s'obligeraient, après avoir reçu le complément de leur éducation, à tenir une maison d'école commune pendant deux ans. Par cet arrangement, nous aurions des professeurs nés et élevés dans notre milieu, identifiés de sentiments et d'intérêts avec nos institutions, et

nous ne serions pas, comme nous le sommes, dépendants des autres Etats pour avoir des instituteurs d'écoles publiques.

Je recommande à la Législature le passage d'une loi fixant une fois le caractère militaire de cette Institution, ainsi que l'appropriation nécessaire pour établir et bâtir en connection avec l'Institution un dépôt d'armes et de munitions de guerre.

ECOLE NORMALE—NOUVELLE-ORLEANS.

Votre attention particulière est appelée sur le rapport des Directeurs de l'Ecole Normale de la Nouvelle-Orléans, rapport inclus dans celui du Surintendant de l'Education Publique. Cette Institution est certainement digne de votre libéralité et de votre sollicitude.

LIBRAIRIE D'ETAT.

Je ne puis clore mon dernier message annuel, sans faire une juste mention de M. Droz, Bibliothécaire capable et habile. M. Droz est un digne et vieux serviteur du public, qui a dévoué les meilleures années de sa vie à ce département, et qui, par son activité et son indnstrie, a donné à l'Etat une bibliothèque dont il peut être fier.

BUREAU DE SANTE.

Le rapport du Bureau de Santé que je vous soumets, présente plusieurs faits intéressants et digne de fixer votre attention.

INSTITUTIONS DE CHARITE.

L'Instiution pour les sourds, les muets et les aveugles continue à prospérer et prend rang maintenant parmi les plus florissantes des Etats-Unis. Des occupations industrielles ont été introduites, l'imprimerie entre autres, conformément à un acte législatif ; les élèves y ont fait des progrès remarquables. Si leur travail était employé à la création d'une bibliothèque pour les écoles de district, les frais en seraient grandement réduits.

Vous lirez le rapport sur la Maison des Fous à Jackson, et vous connaitrez sa situation et ses besoins. Je ne puis résister au plaisir de dire que cette Institution est la mieux conduite et la moins coûteuse de toutes celles du même genre dans les Etats-Unis : elle témoigne bien de la libéralité et de la générosité de notre Etat.

Je vous recommande le rapport des Administrateurs de l'Hôpital de Charité. Le bureau des Directeurs et les officiers de cette institution se sont acquittés de leurs devoirs et de leur mission avec une grande fidélité.

PROCES DES ESCLAVES ACCUSES D'OFFENSES CAPITALES.

J'ai déjà appelé l'attention de la Législature sur la loi relative au procès des esclaves accusés d'offenses capitales. Ce sujet, que je crois d'une

grande importance, n'a pas arrêté l'attention de vos prédécesseurs. Je réclame la vôtre en vous soumettant les mêmes considérations. La manière dont les esclaves sont poursuivis par un tribunal spécial établi à cet effet, a pour résultat le renvoi d'un grand nombre à la prison d'Etat, pour offenses légères et communes, tandis que si l'administration de la justice était dans ces cas restreinte aux Cours de District et aux juris, la punition serait aussi certaine. Je recommande le rappel de la loi qui inflige à un esclave la punition par l'emprisonnement au Pénitencier.

NEGRES LIBRES ET ESCLAVES QUI LOUENT LEUR TEMPS.

L'Acte No. 97, passé par la dernière Assemblée Générale, pour empêcher l'émigration des nègres libres des autres Etats dans celui-ci, bien qu'il ait été mis en vigueur avec zèle, n'a pas atteint son objet. Les nombreuses manières d'éluder la loi s'aperçoivent même sur un examen superficiel de l'Acte.

Il y a un autre sujet sur lequel je voudrais appeler votre attention. Avec les meilleures intentions, et certainement sans calculer la mauvaise tendance de la pratique, beaucoup de propriétaires d'esclaves sont tombés dans la fatale habitude de leur permettre de louer librement leur temps, ou, en d'autres termes, de leur allouer des libertés et des priviléges totalement inconsistants avec leur propre condition et un bon gouvernement. L'influence d'un tel exemple sur notre population esclave est très-ruineuse et devrait être arrêtée par des lois sévères, tant à l'égard du maître qu'à l'égard de l'esclave.

TERMES DE LA COUR SUPREME.

La loi qui oblige la Cour Suprême à tenir trois sessions séparées en dehors de la ville de la Nouvelle-Orléans, demande à être amendée. Il serait bon de fixer un point hors de la ville où les trois sessions pourraient être réunies en une seule. Cela donnerait à nos Juges ce repos qui est nécessaire dans les travaux aussi ardus que ceux auxquels ils sont appelés.

MAISON DU GOUVERNEUR.

Je recommande fortement à l'Assemblée Générale la convenance d'établir dans le sein de la capitale une maison pour l'Exécutif.

A la veille de remettre entre les mains de mon successeur les devoirs et la responsabilité des fonctions de Gouverneur, j'ai pensé pouvoir, sans indiscrétion exprimer cette suggestion, et je n'ai pas besoin pour l'appuyer d'invoquer une autre raisen que celle de la convenance. Le magistrat en chef de l'Etat doit avoir, pendant son administration, une résidence en harmonie avec sa situation.

AGENTS DU NORD.

Permettez-moi de présenter à votre considération un mal qui s'accroit avec rapidité. Dans presque toutes nos villes et tous nos villages, on voit

des agents représentatifs des grandes maisons d'affaires du Nord, qui vendent journellement, sur échantillons, des marchandises, sans payer pour le maintien du gouvernement la licence que nos propres marchands payent eux-mêmes chaque année. Je recommande le vote de lois sévères pour empêcher cette espèce de trafic.

LEGISLATION PRECIPITEE.

J'appelle l'attention de la Législature sur les maux qui résultent de toute législation précipitée. Les trois quarts des Actes de l'Assemblée Générales présentés à la signature du Gouverneur, sont passés dans les dix derniers jours de chaque session, le forçant ainsi à approuver ou à rejeter des actes qu'il n'a pas même le temps de lire, loin d'avoir celui de les examiner. La responsabilité d'une législation pareille devrait-elle être à la charge de l'Exécutif ?

RELATIONS FEDERALES.

J'avais espéré pouvoir me séparer de la haute situation à laquelle m'avait élevé la confiance du peuple, sans être obligé de m'expliquer sur des affaires nationales et sur des sujets de politique générale. Mais le temps nous précipite rapidement à une crise qu'il n'est pas possible de passer sous silence. Je sais, néanmoins, que le peuple de la Louisiane ne sera pas froid pour défendre ses droits attaqués ainsi que son honneur, et il sera à la hauteur de cette double défense. Quand on pense que la soumission assurerait à peine une sécurité temporaire, il n'est pas possible que la Louisiane rabatte rien de ses inaliénables prérogatives ou se retire de la position vraie, juste et patriotique qu'elle a toujours si noblement occupée.

Mes vues sur les plus importantes questions de l'intérieur sont très-connues de vous et du public ; elles n'ont pas changé. Depuis plus d'un quart de siècle, une lutte sectionnelle, basée sur la haine de l'institution de l'esclavage a été dirigée par le Nord contre le Sud. Au début, les membres de cette méprisable organisation étaient faibles de nombre et d'intelligence, et leurs publications fanatiques et atroces furent des sujets de risée pour les deux parties de la Confédération. En ce temps, chaque Etat respectait ses obligations constitutionnelles ; l'urbanité fut maintenue dans les souverainetés respectives, les bons sentiments et la fraternité régnaient presque universellement : et ce gouvernement de pouvoirs égaux, souverains et indépendants, le plus beau qu'on ait jamais connu, était la merveille et l'admiration du monde. Il m'en coûte beaucoup de dire que cet heureux état de choses a changé, que la petite bande de fanatiques, si ridicule autrefois, s'est élevée à l'état d'une organisation puissante ; que les Etats souverains, par leurs législatures et leurs gouverneurs, ont passé des lois qui bravent la Constitution Fédérale, qui annulent les lois du Congrès, qui renversent les arrêts de la Cour Fédérale du dernier ressort et méprisent l'autorité exécutive du gouvernement, quand elle est exercée en conformité stricte avec les demandes de la Constitution.

Tout cela est fait sans cause, sans provocation ou besoin. Les Etats à esclaves n'ont causé aucun tort à leurs frères des Etats libres, et dans toutes les controverses ils ont cédé les premiers par amour de la paix, bien qu'ils fussent intéressés à la question, quand le Nord au contraire n'y avait aucun intérêt. Mais chaque concession et chaque compromis a été suivi de nouvelles demandes et d'agressions nouvelles, jusqu'à ce que le fanatisme devenu audacieux par nos condescendances et nos transactions, aussi bien que par les progrès de son pouvoir dans le Nord, dise maintenant dans le Parlement Américain et dans toutes les assemblées législatives du Nord qu'aucun Etat à esclaves ne sera plus admis dans l'Union.

Un grand, un mauvais homme, grand par l'intelligence et terriblement grand par l'influence, le premier candidat des Républicains Noirs pour la présidence, annonça il n'y a pas un an, de sa place dans le Sénat des Etats-Unis, que son parti aurait bientôt le contrôle du gouvernement et qu'alors la Cour Suprême serait réorganisée de telle manière que ses arrêts lui seraient favorables. Ensuite, dans plusieurs discours faits dans son propre Etat, à la veille d'une election générale, en présence d'une immense assemblée de peuple, il déclara qu'il y avait un irrépressible conflit entre le travail libre du Nord et le travail esclave du Sud, et que le Sud devait devenir libre et le Nord esclave. Peu de jours après qu'il eut prononcé ces discours, le gouvernement d'un des plus puissants Etats de l'Union passa, par une écrasante majorité du peuple, dans les mains de ceux qui avouaient des opinions semblables aux siennes.

Ce qui est vrai de New-York est vrai appliqué à beaucoup des Etats libres ; le sombre linceul de l'abolitionisme les obscurcit presque tous ; et si nous devons prendre le passé comme criterium pour le futur, il est presqu'inutile de regarder au-delà de la ligne de Mason et Dixon pour obtenir du secours, à moins que le Sud ne présente pour la présidence un homme tellement hors ligne qu'il commande le respect et le concours de tous les hommes honnêtes. Et avec celui-là, le Sud doit présenter comme son ultimatum cette dernière alternative : "Cet homme, sans reproche sous tous les autres rapports, sera-t-il rejeté simplement parce que sa demeure est au Sud. Si cela est, il faut que nous le sachions, et le plus tôt sera le mieux."

Un seul parti—le parti démocratique—reste pour soutenir la cause de la Constitution et l'Union, telle que nos pères l'ont établie. Ce parti, cependant, malgré ses services pour le pays, les grands hommes qu'il a produits, ses droits à l'appui général, son passé magnifique et ses splendides promesses pour l'avenir, est en minorité dans la majeure section de la Confédération. Sa bannière a été bravement défendue, et il y a encore au Nord de braves esprits qui combattront, ralliés autour d'elle, jusqu'à la mort. Cependant ses plis, presque partout dans cette section du pays, sont trainés dans la poussière de la défaite. Il serait futile de fermer nos yeux à ces

faits—et ce qui serait coupable de la part d'un citoyen devient criminel de celle d'un officier public. Je suis résolu à remplir *mon* devoir,—le reste dépend de vous—et à votre sagesse et à votre discrétion j'en remets le soin avec confiance.

Les troubles d'Harper's Ferry sont un cas frappant, qui indique d'une manière significative le genre de guerre civile que des milliers d'ennemis s'accumulant constamment se proposent de diriger contre nous. Le nombre de ceux qui ont pris une part active est insignifiant; mais quand nous considérons qu'ils ont commis les crimes de trahison et de meurtre, et étaient en mesure d'équiper et d'armer pour l'œuvre de destruction plusieurs milliers d'esclaves ou autres conjurés; que la presse et les habitants en général de l'extrême Nord, par différentes raisons, ont sympathisé avec les traîtres et les meurtriers et sollicité leur pardon, nous ne pouvons fermer nos yeux sur l'aspect de mauvais augure des affaires.

L'Etat de la Virginie a noblement vengé ses lois et infligé aux traîtres un châtiment exemplaire. On doit s'en féliciter, bien qu'on n'attendait rien moins de la fière et antique mère de sages et d'hommes d'Etat. Mais tout en reconnaissant et en louant tout cela, n'y a-t-il rien de plus que des mots requis de ceux des Etats à esclaves qui sont le moins exposés? La bataille pour nos droits et la défense de nos institutions est à livrer, doit être livrée dans les Etats frontières où l'esclavage existe. Ce serait lâcheté aussi bien que pénurie de les laisser combattre seuls dans ce combat qui, dans plus d'un sens, est notre bataille autant que la leur; nous devons leur donner notre sympathie actuelle, et un appui positif. La Virginie, Etat à esclaves de la frontière, a été envahie. La souveraineté de la Virginie a été convenablement vengée par la Virginie.

Pour cela, elle ne demandait pas et n'avait pas besoin d'assistance. Mais il a été dispendieux pour elle d'écraser et de punir les ennemis du Sud. Pour l'assurer, elle et les autres Etats à esclaves de la frontière, de la coopération active de la Louisiane, pour leur montrer que nous reconnaissons leur cause comme nôtre, je recommande l'allocation immédiate par la Législature de vingt-cinq mille dollars, comme quotum de la Louisiane dans ces dépenses, allocation qui devrait être accompagnée d'un engagement solennel qne notre Etat soutiendra ses frères les Etats du Sud jusqu'à son dernier homme et son dernier dollar, dans toute entreprise qu'ils jugeront convenable d'adopter pour garantir nos droits constitutionnels.

Ayant maintenant jeté un coup-d'œil aussi rapide que possible sur l'état des affaires, on peut s'attendre à ce que je suggère un remède. On dit qu'il y a guérison à tous les maux: qu'il y ait une guérison pour le fanatisme qui afflige la partie septentrionale du pays, j'en doute. A moins que sa marche ne soit arrêtée, il ne peut y avoir un rétablissement de ces bons sentiments entre les deux sections, qui est le seul espoir pour la préservation de l'Union dans son intégrité.

Il faut donc faire face à l'ennemi commun et le faire reculer ; il ne faut pas attendre son approche, ce serait, dans mon opinion, ruineux. Je crois que cela a été de la faute du Sud depuis le commencement ; si nous n'avions jamais fait de compromis sur un droit constitutionnel, nous ne serions pas dans la situation où nous sommes maintenant.

Je recommande une réorganisation complète de la milice. Passez une loi si claire, si stricte et si intelligible qu'il soit impossible de l'éluder, qui imposerait la formation et l'instruction d'une ou plusieurs compagnies volontaires, en proportion de la population, dans chaque paroisse de l'Etat. Que l'Etat leur fournisse des armes et établisse des casernes. L'Etat doit fournir à l'équipement de ses propres hommes, sous tous les rapports, par lui-même, de façon à être indépendant, si l'heure de l'épreuve venait, de toute asssistance extérieure. Une souveraineté qui est incapable de faire cela, ou qui, en étant capable, ne veut pas le faire, dans les circonstances présentes, est impropre à l'exercice des droits de souveraineté. Je suis sûr que la Louisiane ne reculera jamais ; de là, la généralité de mes recommandations. Si mes suggestions sont adoptées, l'Etat sera mis sur le pied de guerre à peu de frais, et sera préparé à soutenir toute occurence.

Je recommande encore que l'Assemblée Générale passe des lois pour l'encouragement de l'industrie domestique et des entreprises de toute sorte. Nous sommes une nation, par nous-mêmes, surabondamment douée de tous les éléments de richesse et de grandeur, pourvu que ces éléments soient fécondés et encouragés par la sagesse de sa législation et l'habileté et l'industrie de nos concitoyens.

Plusieurs des Etats à esclaves ont proposé, dans une certaine éventualité, un Congrès ou Convention pour la consultation et l'adoption de moyens de sécurité mutuelle. Comme la réunion d'un Corps semblable ne violerait aucune loi, n'enfreint aucun droit et pourrait être avantageux, je recommande que la Louisiane s'unisse aux Etats du Sud, ses frères, dans cette Convention, ou toute autre assemblée à laquelle elle peut être appelée à participer. Ce serait de sa part un manque de courtoisie manifeste de refuser de se consulter à l'heure du danger avec ceux dont les intérêts sont identiques aux siens.

On a dit, en vue des hostilités amères du Nord contre nous et de l'institution de l'esclavage, que le Sud devrait adopter des mesures de représailles pour sa propre défense. En cela, il y a beaucoup de raison et de vérité, et si les Législatures du Sud peuvent user de représailles sans violer les lois, elles manqueraient à leur devoir de ne pas le faire. Le Nord, en considérant sa population, est une section dépendante du pays ; il n'exporte comparativement rien de ses propres produits, et importe presque tout. Il trafique avec le capital d'autrui. Il vit en employant les produits du Sud ; sans le patronage du Sud, une banqueroute universelle s'en suivrait bientôt.

Le Sud important très-peu, exporte, en fait, les trois-quarts des produits du pays, qui payent les dettes du pays. Si la récolte de coton du Sud man-

quait une seule année, il ne resterait pas une seule banque, un capitaliste, un manufacturier ou un armateur solvable dans tout le Nord. Aucun homme d'affaires ne contredira eette proposition.

Comment userons-nous de représailles ?

Des juristes distingués, des hommes versés dans la science du droit, ont exprimé l'opinion délibérée que la Législature d'un Etat peut, par un système de licence ou de taxe spéciale, imposer un tel fardeau sur les marchandises quand elles sont *mises en vente* dans sa juridiction, qu'il équivaudrait à une prohibition absolue. Sur ce point, je n'exprime pas d'opinion positive, et je mentionne seulement le sujet, ceci ayant été favorablement cité en haut lieu. Cependant, je le juge digne d'être pris en considération, car si vous trouvez la proposition entièrement légale et vous résolvez à l'adopter, elle aura pour effet de faire de la Nlle-Orléans la plus grande place d'importation, comme elle l'est maintenant d'exportation, sur ce continent. Une perception de droits sur tout objet fabriqué dans ces Etats qui font la guerre à nos institutions, ou importé en passant chez eux, et qui approcherait de la ligne de prohibition, produirait nécessairement une importation directe.

Je n'ai pas besoin de m'étendre sur les avantages immenses qui profiteraient à l'Etat en faisant de la Nouvelle-Orléans la métropole d'importation, comme elle l'est maintenant d'exportation, de l'Union. Elle deviendrait immédiatement le centre des échanges, et ses revenus versés dans le trésor, au taux actuel des taxes, dépasseraient de beaucoup, dans une dizaine d'années, ceux qui sont maintenant payés par tout l'Etat.

Et maintenant, messieurs, j'offre à un peuple généreux les remerciements d'un cœur reconnaissant.

ROBERT C. WICKLIFFE.